

**Abstract 438**

**TITLE:** The Need to Consider Characteristics of Intimate Partner Violence When Designing an Intervention to Increase Condom Use Among HIV-Positive and HIV-Negative Women

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**BACKGROUND/OBJECTIVES:** This study sought to examine the association between HIV status, current abusive relationships, and partner characteristics among a large group of HIV positive (+) and HIV negative (-) inner city women.

**METHODS:** HIV+ women were recruited from an outpatient HIV/AIDS clinic and a sociodemographically similar group of HIV- women were recruited from an outpatient GYN clinic, a drug treatment center, a women's homeless shelter and a Healthy Start site. Current intimate partner abuse was measured with the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale for 166 HIV+ women and 199 HIV- women.

**RESULTS:** 68% of the HIV+ and 63% of the HIV- women had experienced some form of psychological, physical or sexual violence within the last year. A statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) association was found between the two groups of women when the chronicity of the abusive episodes was examined, with HIV+ women more likely to experience an average of 2 or more violent episodes per month ( $X^2 = 8.46$ ). HIV+ women were more likely to report using condoms with their partner ( $X^2 = 80.54$ ) than HIV- women. However, among both groups of women, the amount of abuse was significantly related to the use of condoms with partners: Condoms were less likely to be used in relationships where women were repeatedly abused by their partner. When associations were examined between the HIV+ and the HIV- women with regard to partner characteristics, HIV+ women were more likely to have a partner who had been arrested for a violent offense ( $X^2 = 3.65$ ), or have a partner with an alcohol problem ( $X^2 = 16.71$ ) or a drug problem ( $X^2 = 10.99$ ). For both groups of women, the level of abuse was significantly related to a partner who was controlling, less dependable in times of need, have a partner who got into fights with other family members ( $X^2 = 22.21$ ) and others ( $X^2 = 14.57$ ), own a gun ( $X^2 = 4.73$ ), arrested for a violent offense ( $X^2 = 31.18$ ), have an alcohol ( $X^2 = 12.83$ ) or drug problem ( $X^2 = 16.92$ ).

**CONCLUSION:** Our study's preliminary findings strongly suggest that interventions seeking to increase condom use among HIV+ women and HIV- women at risk must consider the violence-related context of their intimate partner relationships.

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